



© 2000 Cleveland Indians Baseball
Company Limited Partnership
Jacobs Field
2401 Ontario Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44115-4003

Permission to reprint or reproduce any
of the enclosed material must be granted
in writing by the Cleveland Indians.

To learn more about the Cleveland
Indians, please visit our website at
www.indians.com.

PUBLICATION ORDERS

To order a subscription or single issue
of GAME FACE, please call 216.420.GIFT
or toll free at 800.38.TRIBE.

Credits

Our thanks to everyone who assisted the
Advertising and Publications staff of the
Cleveland Indians in the development
of this publication.

PUBLICATION DESIGN & LAYOUT

Zorc Photo & Design
with contributions from Herip
Associates and ZZ Design

PHOTOGRAPHY

Cover and game action by **Gregory**
Drezdzon (unless otherwise noted)

PRINTING

St Ives
Cleveland



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

SPECIAL FEATURES ...

10 INDIANS BY THE NUMBERS by Yank Poleyeff

Number 13 – Omar Vizquel; Number 7 – Kenny Lofton . . . we know our Indians not just by their names, but by the numbers they wear. Ever wonder why or how a player ends up with the number he wears? You'll find the circumstances vary – and they aren't always under the player's control.

36 BUDS by Bill Needle

You might expect powerful hitters – on the same team and sharing a position – to be rivals, but Jim Thome and Richie Sexson are just the opposite – friends. Their similarities *and* their differences have made for a friendship they both value.

46 JUST PLAIN CHUCK by Bill Needle

Charles Nagy has long been a model of consistency. Not flamboyant, Nagy shuns the spotlight. But he's no stranger to winning. Although Nagy is currently recovering from elbow surgery, the Indians are hopeful that he will return to pre-injury form – consistently pitching himself and his team to victory.

62 CITY HEAT AND COUNTRY HARDBALL by Jim Ingraham

They come from different backgrounds and made it to the Majors at different stages in their careers, but Steve Karsay and Paul Shuey both have battled through similar obstacles to play a side-by-side role in the Indians bullpen this season.

88 THE OTHER RAMIREZ by Steve Herrick

Alex Ramirez is not yet a household name in Cleveland, but he has the physical ability, the work ethic, *and* the patience to become a solid player for the Tribe.



MORE FOR YOU ...

Welcome!	6
www.indians.com	8
Ballpark Diagram	20
2000 Indians Schedule	22
Promotional Events	22
Jacobs Field	24
Ground Rules	
Indians in the Community	26-30, 98
Baseball Operations	32-33
& Minor Leagues	
<i>(includes 2000 Season Schedules of local Indians affiliates)</i>	
Ballpark Concessions	34
Scoring Blocks/	52-54
You Can Score The Game	
Béisbol en Español	67
Cleveland Indians	68
License Plates	
Vizquel Recognized for	68
Humanitarian Efforts	
Now You Can Call Your Own	70
Game (at the FanCast Booth)	
American League/National	76
League Directory	
Indians Broadcasters	80-82
Indians Radio	86
& Television Network	
2000 Cleveland Indians	93
Indians Online Auctions	99
Slider's Fun and Games	100-101

You Are What You WEAR INDIANS By THE NUMBERS

by Yank Poleyeff

In a sport as linked to numbers as baseball – final scores, batting averages, home run totals, ERA – it should come as no surprise that uniform numbers are often as synonymous with players as their own names. Look around at today's Jacobs Field crowd and you will notice dozens of Thomases, Alomars, Loftons, and Ramirezes honoring their respective heroes by wearing their numbers.

The obsession carries over to the local diamonds as well. No amateur baseball or softball coach would even think of ordering uniforms without numbers, and the smart ones avoid controversy by asking their players about numeric preferences in advance. A fan of Sam McDowell during his boyhood, this reporter, over the years, has accumulated enough #48 softball jerseys to open a sporting goods store, although his softball pitching repertoire has never managed to inspire a nickname along the lines of "Sudden Yank."

The reasons that Major League players gravitate to various numbers are as diverse as are the players themselves:

You probably know which player belongs to each helmet by the number – but the storage order is a mystery.

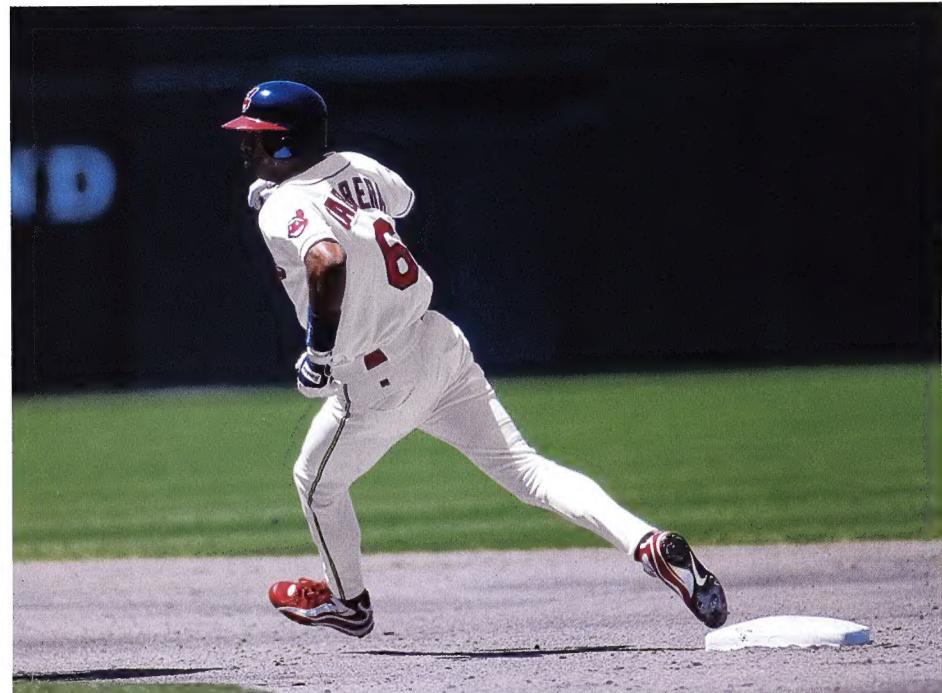


Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

"IF IT'S A VETERAN GUY, LIKE CHUCK FINLEY (#31) OR SCOTT KAMIENIECKI (#30), I'LL TRY TO GET HIM INTO THE NUMBER HE'S WORN HIS ENTIRE CAREER."

*Ted Walsh
Indians equipment
and home
clubhouse manager*

Roberto Alomar (#12): "My first number in the Minor Leagues was #1, but my favorite was #2. So I asked for #12 when I came up to San Diego (in 1988) and I've worn it ever since."



Jolbert Cabrera (#6): "That's because I am the sixth Colombian ballplayer to play in the Major Leagues."

Ted Walsh, the Indians equipment and home clubhouse manager, is in charge of assigning numbers to players as they join the Tribe.

"Players that have experience in the big leagues come first," explained Walsh, who moved to the Indians in 1997 after working with the San Francisco 49ers for 18 years. "If it's a veteran

First-time numbers, favorite numbers, and national pride played a role in the number choices of Robbie Alomar (below) and Jolbert Cabrera (above).

guy, like Chuck Finley (#31) or Scott Kamieniecki (#30), I'll try to get him into the number he's worn his entire career."

In Finley's case, that meant restoring #31 into regular circulation. It had been used only once since the passing of Indians pitcher Steve Olin in 1993.

"Mike Seghi (Indians traveling secretary) contacted Steve's widow, who has since remarried, to see how she felt about issuing #31 again," Walsh said. "We all agreed that enough time had passed by to go ahead and issue that number."

Rookies, however, don't get the same consideration. During Spring Training, it's not unusual to see players with numbers in the 60s and even 70s scrambling to make the team.

"Until you've had some time in the big leagues, you really don't have priority," Walsh said. "Jaret Wright wore #65 his first spring, even though we all knew he was going to make the big leagues. Once he came north, I was able to put him in #27."



Jaret Wright (#27): "My first choice was #38, since my father (former Angels pitcher Clyde Wright) wore that number. But once I made it to the World Series wearing #27, and then found out Herb Score (Indians 1950s pitching phenom) had worn it, I wouldn't give it up."

Enrique Wilson (#35): "I like the way (White Sox slugger) Frank Thomas plays the game, so #35 is fine with me also."

A couple of Indians, however, have grown attached to the astronomical number they were originally assigned as rookies and continue to wear it today.

Alex Ramirez (#61): "It was my first Major League number. They wanted to bring me down to #26, but it was too late – #61 had already become my lucky number."

Ricardo Rincon (#73): "They offered me #37 when I got here. But people know me as #73 Ricky Rincon, so I asked to keep it."

Naturally, coaches usually accommodate the numerical preferences of veteran players. Jeff Newman wore #55 for his first three years as Indians third base coach, until Orel Hershiser, who had worn #55 during his glory days with the Dodgers, was signed in 1995. So Newman became #16 until Dwight Gooden, who had worn #16 during HIS glory days with the Mets, joined the Indians in 1998. So it was back to #55 for Newman, since Hershiser had just moved to the Giants. But in the Spring Training of 1999, there was Hershiser again, back with the Tribe as a non-roster invitee. This time, Newman was assigned #8. When Orel signed with the Mets, Newman recovered his #55 for the remainder of the season. He now wears #55 as a coach for the Baltimore Orioles.

For modern baseball fans who take numbers for granted, it might come as a surprise to learn that, in terms of baseball history, uniform numbers are a fairly recent innovation. As the baseball

movie *Eight Men Out* (which dramatized the 1919 Black Sox scandal) accurately portrayed, uniforms did not have numbers for the first three decades of the 20th century. How did fans tell who was who? Well, fielders could be identified by their positions in the field. Batters were announced over "public address" systems usually consisting of several strategically placed announcers standing in foul territory and shouting into bullhorns. In some ballparks, names were written in huge chalk letters on the manual scoreboard. But beyond that, outside of face recognition from newspaper photos, it was anybody's guess.

On June 26, 1916, the Cleveland Indians became the first Major League team to experiment with uniform num-

Sometimes, a young player's first choice in a number is not available . . . in the case of Jaret Wright (below), the number he was issued became his "favorite" after he had worn it for a season filled with success.



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

"I KNEW THURMAN MUNSON BECAUSE MY DAD [SANDY ALOMAR, SR.] PLAYED WITH HIM ON THE YANKEES. ANY TIME I HAD THE CHANCE TO WEAR HIS #15, WHETHER IN AA, AAA, OR THE MAJORS, I WOULD JUMP AT IT."

Sandy Alomar, Jr.

bers, wearing a small number on their left sleeves only. After a few weeks, the numbers were discontinued. Another try in 1917, with the numbers on the right sleeves this time, also lasted only a few weeks.

The practice of wearing numbers on the back of the uniform caught on after the Yankees instituted it in 1929. Their numbering system followed the batting order (hence Babe Ruth was #3, Lou Gehrig #4) with pitchers in double digits.

Despite players' complaints that uniform numbers made them look like convicts, and owners' concerns that scorecard sales would be hurt (GAME FACE magazine was not in existence at the time), uniform numbers became so popular with fans that the innovation was here to stay.

The Indians, along with most of the American League, adopted the

practice in 1931. By 1937, the last hold-out, Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics, were on board and the Major Leagues became fully numbered.

Two of the numbers issued by the Tribe in 1931 were eventually retired – #3 (Earl Averill) and #18 (Mel Harder). But during the 1930s and '40s, ballplayers weren't as tied to a particular number as they are today. Many of them switched uniform numbers annually. In fact, among the six players honored by the Indians by retirement of their uniforms, only three – Averill, Harder, and Lou Boudreau (#5) – wore the same number throughout their entire playing careers. Larry Doby and Bob Lemon each wore FIVE different uniform numbers before settling into the digits that became immortalized, #14 and #21 respectively.

In addition to being in a class by himself as a pitcher, Bob Feller also holds a unique distinction in the number-assignment category. He became the only Tribe pitcher in history to take the mound wearing a single digit (#9) when he made his historic Major League debut on August 23, 1936 as a 16-year-old, striking out 15 St. Louis Browns in a complete-game victory. Feller also wore #14 for two years be-

fore assuming the #19 that eventually became the first number ever retired by the Indians.

In the late 1940s and into the '50s, players became identified with specific numbers more consistently. Veteran Tribe fans from that golden era will recall the exploits of leadoff hitter Bobby Avila, appropriately assigned #1, and of the Indians answer to Mickey Mantle, Cleveland's own #7 slugger Al Rosen.

On the mound, Feller, Lemon, Early Wynn (#24), and Mike Garcia (#25) were given their target by catcher (#4) Jim Hegan throughout the era.

But when Frank (Trader) Lane took over as general manager of the Indians in 1957, players came and went so fast that the classic vendors' cry was never more accurate: 'you really couldn't tell the players without a scorecard.'

Lane's undoing was his trade of the popular Rocky Colavito (first #38, then #6) to Detroit for Harvey Kuenn in the spring of 1960. Fan outrage and the Indians poor 1960 record forced Lane to resign his post before the 1961 season. The following year, a young quality control specialist named Cy Buynak accepted a part-time job working in the Indians clubhouse. Buynak took over as the Indians clubhouse manager in 1966



Of course, many players – like Sandy Alomar (right) – choose the number worn by a player they admired in years past.

Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

and held the job for the next 28 years. He is currently in charge of the visitors' clubhouse at Jacobs Field.

"When Birdie Tebbetts took over (as Indians manager in 1963), he wanted the pitchers situated together in the locker room, as well as the catchers, infielders, and outfielders, so they could talk strategy," Buynak recalled. Since the lockers in Major League clubhouses are traditionally laid out in numerical order, Tebbetts' edict meant a change in virtually every player's uniform number from 1962 to 1963.

Catchers were assigned single digits, infielders had numbers in the teens, outfielders in the twenties, and pitchers were 30 and up. Despite Tebbetts' departure in 1966, Buynak followed this numbering system consistently, with few exceptions, into the 1980s.

The acquisition of star players from other teams, however, often presented a problem, such as the time slugger Frank Robinson joined the Indians in late 1974.

"When Robinson came over, he wanted the #20 he'd worn his entire career. George Hendrick was wearing it at the time, but he was willing to give it up and take #1," Buynak said. "In those days, we were running the team on a shoestring. We couldn't afford new uniforms, so we did the best we could to strip the old number off and put the new one on. But we couldn't quite get the '2' or the '0' off entirely, so for the last two weeks of the season, Hendrick looked like he was wearing #210!"

Buynak, who in 1990 had a co-starring role in the made-for-TV movie *The Babe Ruth Story*, has issued both the lowest and highest numbers ever worn by a Cleveland Indian.

The lowest: "When Paul Dade came to the Indians, he asked for a couple of numbers that weren't available. So Mike Seghi and I suggested to him, 'Paul, why don't you be the first guy ever to wear #00?' Paul was a bit of a 'hot dog' and he started to like the idea. But then we had to talk (general manager) Gabe Paul into it, which wasn't easy."

The highest: "When Jack Armstrong came over from the Reds, he

When players choose the number of someone they admired, it may be the number previously worn by a family member (sometimes a well-known Major Leaguer and sometimes not). Jim Thome's number, for example, is a tribute to his grandfather – who played in the midwestern Three-I League.

wanted something with his lucky number seven. But everything from 7 to 57 was already taken. So he asked me for #77. I said okay, but made sure he was really serious about wearing it the whole season."

Armstrong isn't alone among players requesting special numbers when available. Many desire to wear the numbers of their childhood baseball heroes.

Omar Vizquel (#13): "Davey Concepcion (Venezuelan shortstop who starred for the Reds of the 1970s) was my hero. Not too many people like to wear #13 anyway, so it was always available."

Sandy Alomar (#15): "I knew Thurman Munson because my dad (Sandy Alomar, Sr.) played with him on the Yankees. Any time I had the chance to wear his #15, whether in AA, AAA, or the Majors, I would jump at it."

Buddy Bell, Indians star third baseman and fan favorite of the 1970s, had a baseball icon closer to home.

"Buddy Bell started out #9," Buynak explained, "but asked for #25 when it became available, because that's what his father (Reds and Pirates outfielder Gus Bell) wore."

Bell received his coveted #25 in 1973, his second season. Once Bell retired, after a distinguished 18-year career, Buynak, who had become close personal friends of the Bell family, hesitated to re-issue the number.

"People used to kid me about having retired Buddy's number unofficially," Buynak laughed, "but actually I was just waiting for the right player to give it to."

Jim Thome (#25): "My grandfather, Chuck Thome, used to play for Peoria of the Three-I League and wore this number. He passed away right before I played my first game in the Majors. So this is a dedication to him."

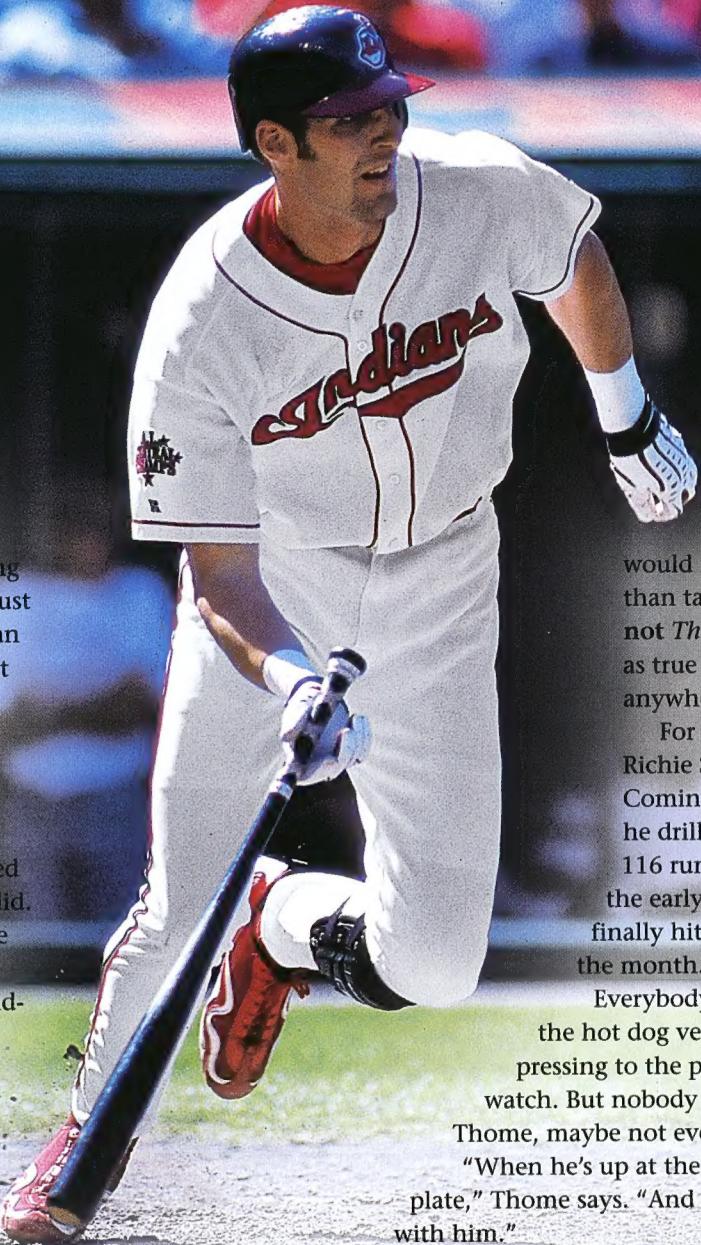
"When Thome asked me for it," Buynak recalled, "I told him 'Jim, here it is, but you better honor that number. It was a great player and a great person that wore it before you.'"

Suffice it to say that, on and off the field, Thome has kept his part of the bargain.



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

BUDS



BY BILL NEEDLE

Nobody ever sits around thinking about why they've made a friend. Just about every pair of good buddies can tell you how they became close. But few can tell you why.

Think about Felix and Oscar in *The Odd Couple*. One a neat-freak/fashion photographer, the other a slob/sportswriter. These guys, outwardly at least, should have despised each other — and it appeared they did. They made each other crazy and we got to watch — and laugh. But between them existed a genuine friendship; unspoken and totally incomprehensible.

Nonetheless, they were friends, true friends. Neither would be able to tell anyone why.

Jim Thome and Richie Sexson are in no way Felix and Oscar. Thome does his shooting with a shotgun, not a Nikon, and there are times Sexson

would rather digest a sports section than talk to a sportswriter. They're not *The Odd Couple*. But they're as true a pair of friends as exists anywhere.

For example, it's no secret Richie Sexson had a tough April. Coming off a superb 1999 in which he drilled 31 homers and drove in 116 runs, Sexson labored through the early weeks of the 2000 season, finally hitting his first homer late in the month.

Everybody from Charlie Manuel to the hot dog vendor could tell Sexson was pressing to the point it was "de"pressing to watch. But nobody felt Sexson's pain more than Thome, maybe not even Sexson.

"When he's up at the plate, it's like I'm up at the plate," Thome says. "And when he struggles, I struggle with him."

To fully understand Thome's comment, one must try to understand Thome. For example, when Charlie Manuel, often regarded as a "second" father to Thome,

was introduced as the Indians new manager at a Jacobs Field press conference, Thome was there. He had been in Grand Rapids, MI for an ESPN hunting show. But Thome made the trip to Manuel's coming-out party.

"It was only about an hour's flight," Thome says. "But I would have flown across the country to be at Charlie's press conference."

Jim Thome doesn't have a devious bone in his 235-pound body. There is no deception to him. He doesn't manipulate. He doesn't tell a writer asking about his friendship with Sexson what the writer would like to hear.

Thome speaks from the heart, with a sensitivity that contrasts directly with the way he attacks a baseball. No player

in baseball is more open and if Jim Thome says he feels his friend Richie Sexson's pain during a slump, you can take those feelings all the way to The White House.

Somebody raised Jim Thome right. "Jimmy cares," says Manuel. "It's one of his great traits."

"He's about as pure as they come, a really nice guy," Sexson says.

"You can't tell if he's gone four-for-four or oh-for-four and that's tough to do in this game. He's always positive, always. And it never seems like he's ever had a bad day."

"He's an emotional player who likes to play with something on the line. Every team has a guy who refuses to lose, a player who pushes and pulls the rest

of the team along. That's what Jimmy does for us."

Some of Thome's positive attitude is starting to rub off on Sexson, as sensitive as Thome in his conversation.

"Jimmy's positive attitude is starting to make a difference with me," Sexson says. "It's bad for me to go through a tough time, but it's even tougher to accept that I'm letting my teammates down, to go back to the dugout after making an out."

"But thanks to some of the talks I've had with Jimmy over the years, I'm starting to learn you're going to fail

They're alike, yet different – fellow first basemen – and friends – Jim Thome (below) and Richie Sexson (left).



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

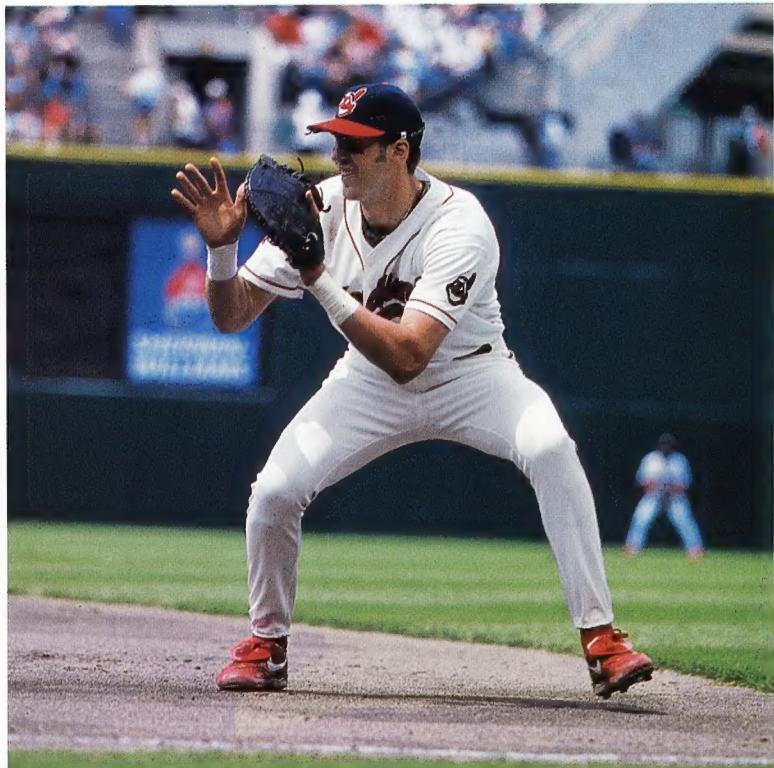
**" . . . I TOLD MYSELF IF
I EVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY
TO TEACH SOMEBODY, OR
HELP THEM BECOME A BETTER
PLAYER, I WAS GOING
TO DO IT."**

Jim Thome

sometimes in this game; you'll have great at-bats for outs and bad at-bats for hits. His attitude is good."

Sexson is more complex than Thome, perhaps because he's five years younger in age and six years younger in big league experience, still sorting through the emotions that come from succeeding and failing at baseball's highest level.

"He didn't do anything special when I had the rough start this season. Jimmy's NOT my big brother, he's my friend," Sexson says when asked if his friendship with Thome



has led to one or more "Big Brother" chats about slow starts and the burden of potential. "He's smart enough not to try to 'fix' my problems and he also knows there's going to be a time he's going to go through the same tough spots, too."

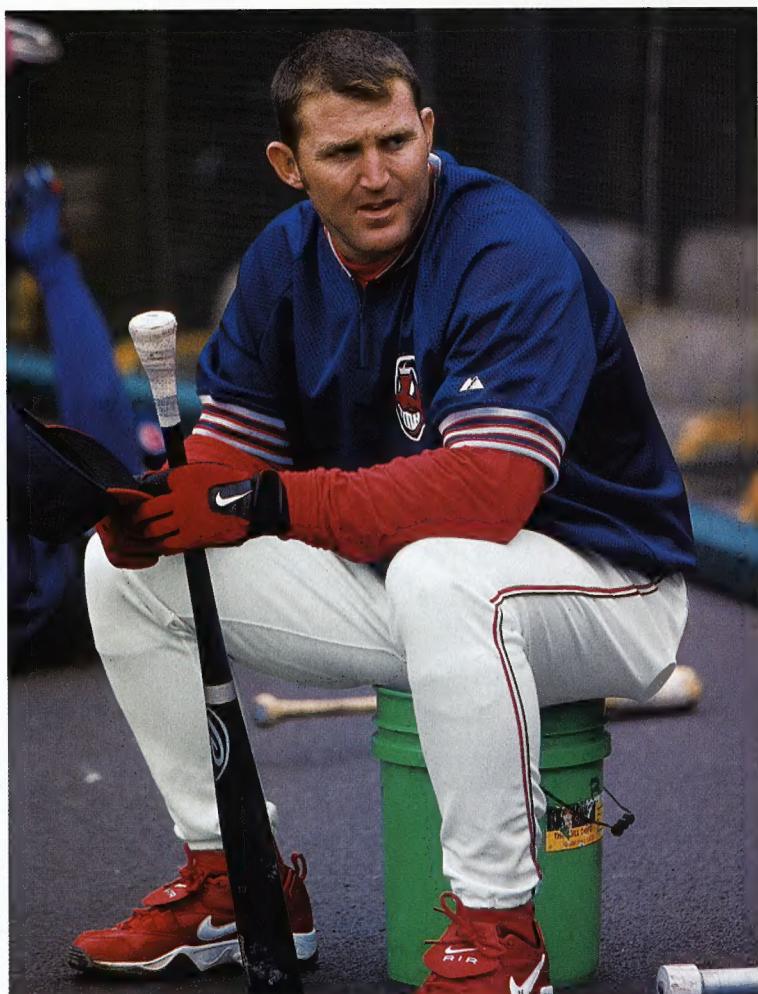
Thome says, "I can help Richie to a certain extent, but we've got coaches for that. The one thing I told him was the same thing that was told to me. Try to get a hit a day. Don't come out and try to get four or five hits because when you're going bad, hits are tough to come by. I just said, 'Let your ability take over.' He's going to be a great player."

The friendship between the All-Star from Peoria, IL and the emerging star from Brush Prairie, WA began – not surprisingly – at first base, the position they share in the Indians defensive alignment.

"A lot of the reason we became friends is that Richie is a first baseman," Thome says. "Same as when I came up as a third baseman. Guys like Brook Jacoby and Jeff Manto took me aside, and they wanted to teach me how the game was played in the Majors. And they liked me, too. They respected the fact that I was a decent player and that I might have a chance to play at this level. After what they did for me, I told myself if I ever had the opportunity to teach somebody, or help them become a better player, I was going to do it. That's just my personality."

"When Richie came up, we'd hang around together in Spring Training. We were always taking ground balls

Although he's the veteran member of the pair, Thome (left) says he's learned a thing or two from watching the younger Sexson (above) play first base.



Both photos: Gregory Drezdzon

together, spending a lot of time together on and off the field. We are power-hitter type players, we have a lot of similarities, except he hits righty and I hit lefty. We found out we like a lot of the same things."

Sexson sees the beginning of the friendship from a different perspective. "Jimmy helped my transition from the Minors to the big leagues," Sexson says. "He was there to talk with if I needed to go to him, and it really made me feel relaxed – having an established guy on my side. I felt under the microscope, and he helped me feel not as tense about it."

One might sense an irony, realizing Thome and Sexson play the same position, wondering if there's competition for playing time. After all, baseball is the ultimate combination of "me" and "we" in the billion-dollar world of professional sports. Some teams have experienced dissension as two talented performers vie for plate appearances and innings in the field. One of Cleveland's Western Division rivals suffered for several seasons with a rivalry between two All-Stars, team-



Photo: Gregory Drazdzon

"IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE IN DIRECT COMPETITION FOR ANYTHING . . . WE JUST WANT TO COMPETE TOGETHER FOR A CHAMPIONSHIP."

Richie Sexson

mates since college, that eventually resulted in the breaking up of the matched pair of lefty sluggers. The Indians don't seem to have anything like that to worry about with Thome and Sexson.

"I think Richie has unlimited ability, as much as I do," Thome says. "For me, it's a great relationship because we can put our abilities together and become those great players people want us to be."

Sexson makes his position clear in the non-controversy over playing time. "It really doesn't matter what I do. He'll play first when he wants to. He'll DH when he wants to. He's earned that right. No matter what I do, it's not going to have any bad effect on Jimmy."

"He's the All-Star. He's the guy who'll probably be the team's all-time home run leader. I'm the guy just trying to establish myself in the Majors. Besides, I can play outfield, we both can DH, he hits lefty and I hit righty. There's a lot of combinations for both of us. It's not like we're in direct competition for anything. I'm not going to take his spot at first base unless he wants me to. We just want to compete together for a championship."

"It's weird when you try to pick out qualities he has that I don't, Thome says. "We both have similar power, we both hit the ball a long way, we both strike out at times."

"For me, whether it's positive or negative, there just aren't many differences between us. I've learned a lot from Richie watching him play defense, seeing what a really good first baseman he is and having that fun competition, whether it's offensive or defensive, trying to make myself better."

Both relative newlyweds, Thome served as a groomsman in Sexson's wedding last Novem-

Rather than rivals playing the same position, Thome and Sexson have become friends – the established player showing the younger one "the ropes."

Another difference the buddies tolerate is the degree to which each gets involved in outdoor activities. Thome has said his favorite vacation spot on the planet is his hunting lodge, *Lodge 25*, a five-bedroom, log house on a 1700-acre retreat about an hour west of Peoria. Sexson, from the Pacific Northwest, enjoys fishing.

"I enjoy hunting and he likes fishing," Thome says, "but I don't push Richie, saying, 'Hey, let's go out bow-hunting together,' or whatever. No matter how much you're alike, you're still different in a lot of ways."

Sexson isn't about to become both hunter and fisherman. "Jimmy's getting better with fishing," Sexson says. But I don't like to hunt. I can't kill deer. I have too many feelings for them."

Though Thome might enjoy a venison steak while Sexson can't stand the thought, each dealt with a food issue prior to the start of the season.

Thome lost 15 pounds while Sexson gained 20 and as close as they are, one might think Thome e-mailed the weight to his buddy in the off-season, just to help him out.

"My metabolism is so high, I lose a pound about every time I take a step," Sexson said. "So last winter, I set out to gain some weight. I ate four solid meals a day plus snacks.



BUDDY TRIVIA



Both photos: Gregory Drezdzon

James Howard Thome	..... full name	Richmond Lockwood Sexson
August 27, 1970	..... date of birth	December 29, 1974
Virgo	..... birth sign	Capricorn
Chuck	..... father's first name	John
Caterpillar employee	..... father's job	builder of spec homes
Andrea	..... wife's name	Kerry
former Cleveland sports media personality	..... wife's sports connection	played college basketball
	most points he scored in a basketball game	44
36	.....
Bulls	..... favorite NBA team	Trail Blazers
ketchup, mayo	..... hamburger	everything, no onions
over medium	..... eggs	scrambled
NCAA Basketball	..... favorite spectator sport	NCAA Football
Hummer	..... vehicle	Lexus
medium	..... steak	medium rare

"Not much grease and fat, though. Proteins early in the day, carbs later on. No junk food and not a lot of candy and sugar."

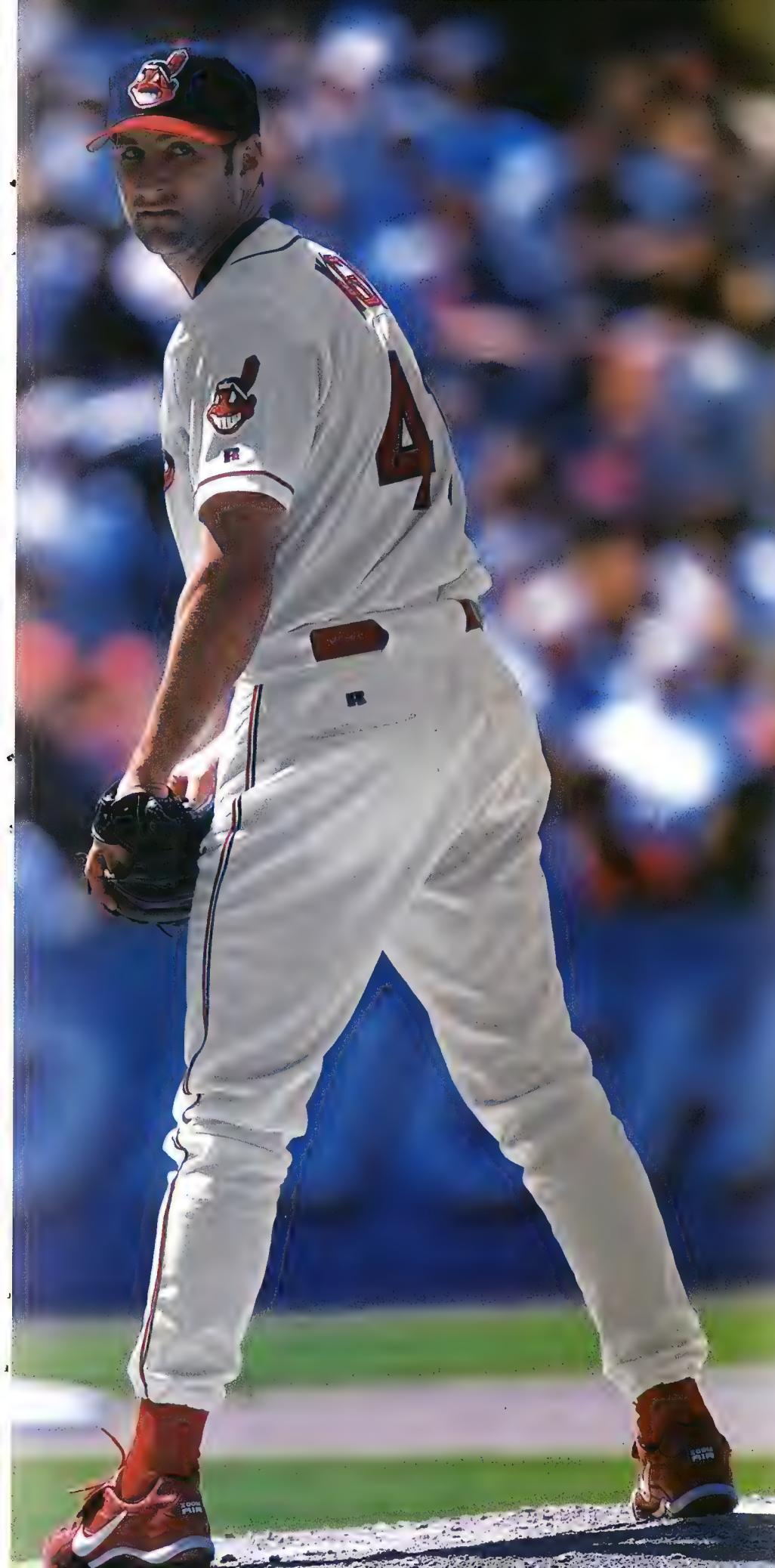
Thome figured losing weight might be a solution to the back problems that bothered him in 1999. "At the end of the season, I evaluated myself and figured I had to play at around 230 to be more agile."

The bond between Thome and Sexson seems too good to be true for the cynics of today, the "sharp guys" who always seem to know there's another story behind the one we see. A close friendship between two well-paid, professional ball-players? C'mon. That's a baseball fairy tale, a Disney epic, complete with tiny mice turning into pitchers and pumpkins into bases.

Thing is, this isn't a story from Mother Goose. Take two sincere, uncomplicated guys, unspoiled by the money and fame that accompany their jobs. Add the same sense of humor, the same goals, joys, and problems. Throw in some differences to provide a little spice, and you've got the same recipe for friendship that might make any of our lives a little bit better.

It doesn't matter that Jim Thome and Richie Sexson can hit a baseball farther than any of us ever dreamed.

At Tribe Jam '99: their musical skills and tastes vary – but their love for a good time is the same.



me, he's a quality starter. He goes out there and gives you a good chance to win."

Maybe it's all the noise from the booming Indians bats of the last six years and the fireworks that follow a Tribe home run that have obscured exactly what Nagy has accomplished since joining the Tribe. In his early seasons, Nagy won 17 games, losing 10, for a 1992 Cleveland club that finished 10 games under .500, his 17 wins constituting 22 percent of the team's triumphs. More amazingly, he won 10 games as a rookie in 1991 for a team that lost 105.

After shoulder surgery in 1993 limited him to just 48 innings for the entire year, Nagy returned in 1994 to win 10 games in a strike-shortened season. Since then, he's never won fewer than 15 per year, averaging 16 victories per season over the last five campaigns. His elbow surgery of late May, however, may put that average in jeopardy.

"I've pitched some good games for the team and I've pitched some bad games, too," Nagy says in a quiet, even voice. "There really isn't any single game that I'd put out there as my best."

Not so fast, there, Chuckster. What about the clincher over Boston in the 1995 Division Series? In that one, to give the Tribe a sweep, Nagy went seven innings, allowing four hits and one earned run, at Fenway Park against a Boston team that featured Jose Canseco and AL MVP Mo Vaughn.

"Well," says Nagy, "we had a two-nothing lead in that series and there really wasn't that much pressure. We knew we'd win, we'd been doing it all year in '95."

C'MON, CHARLIE! NO BIG DEAL? Then what about Game Six of the 1997 ALCS against the Orioles at Camden Yards? Nagy for the Indians. Mike Mussina for the Os. Mussina had struck out 15 in Game Three, just four days before. A Cleveland loss would force a seventh game, the next night, again at Camden Yards.

Nagy responded by battling a powerful Orioles team for seven-and-a-third innings, allowing nine hits, walking three, striking out just four. Baltimore didn't score. Nagy's gutsy performance,

along with Tony Fernandez's homer in the 11th and excellent bullpen relief, helped the Indians to a 1-0, heart-pounding victory and put Cleveland in the World Series for the second time in three seasons. Are you sure that wasn't your best, Mr. Nagy?

"That one? Against the Orioles? I pitched from a stretch the whole game," Nagy says, remembering more the runners on base than how he 'Houdinied' his way out of trouble. "It was OK, I guess."

OK, then, what about the one-hitter against Baltimore in 1992? The 12 strikeouts in Game Four of the 1996 Division Series, also against the Orioles? Either of two career three-hitters?

"They were OK," says Nagy, without much emotion.

MAN! NO WONDER YOU DON'T HAVE A FLASHY NICKNAME! NO WONDER YOU HAVEN'T HAD A CANDY BAR NAMED AFTER YOU! NO WONDER, AFTER 10 SEASONS, YOU'RE MORE AN INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY THAN AUSTIN POWERS!

So how does Nagy remain so even-keeled, quiet and, hence, relatively unknown for a man who has spent a decade with one of baseball's now-eminent franchises? In an era where even a clubhouse thermostat can be punished for a hitter's 0-for-4 performance, Chuck Nagy remains at room

**"... I UNDERSTAND
BASEBALL IS A GAME
OF PEAKS AND
VALLEYS ... IF YOU
WATCH OTHERS, YOU
GET A SENSE OF ...
HOW YOU NEED TO
CARRY YOURSELF TO
GET THROUGH THIS
GAME AT THIS
LEVEL."**

Charles Nagy

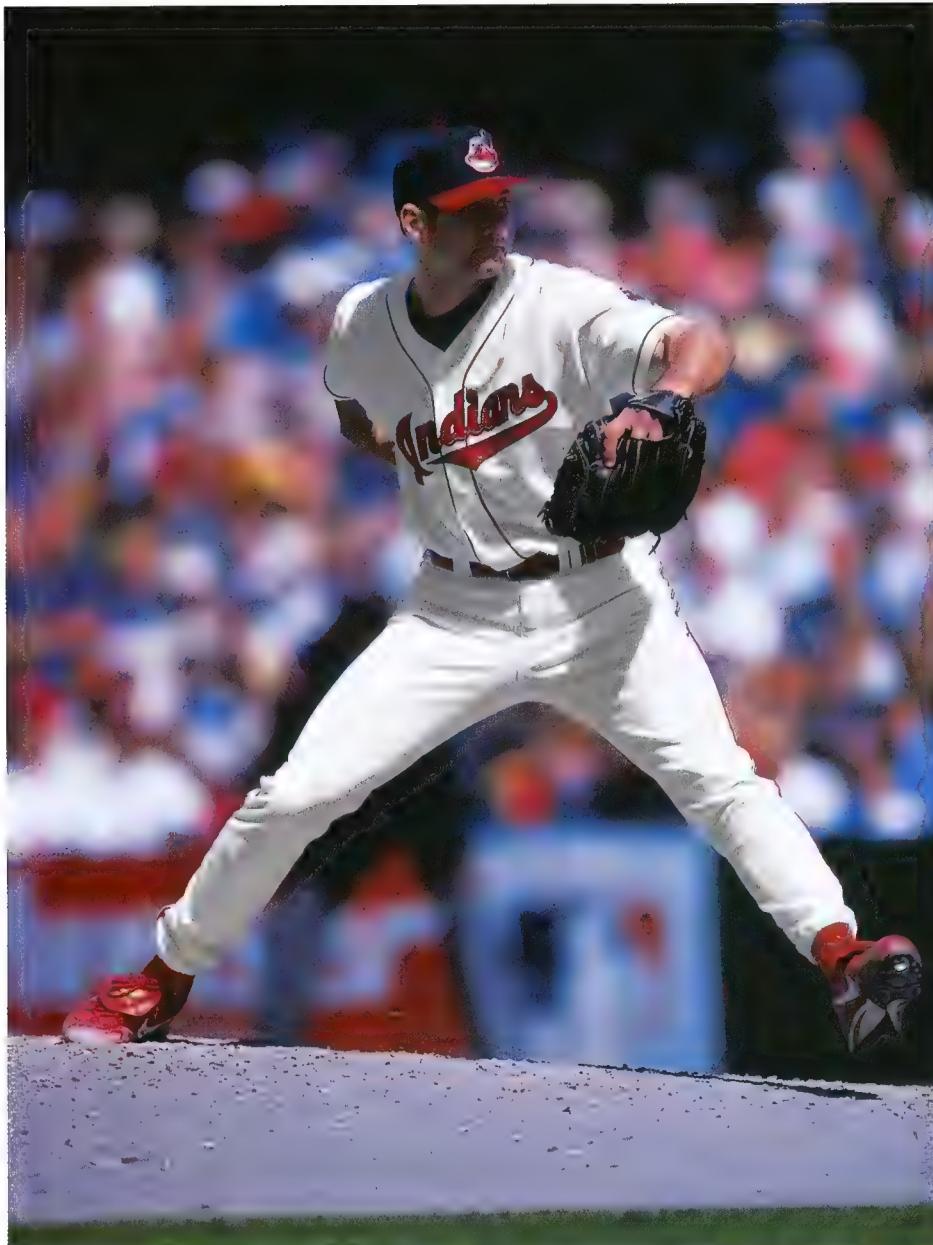


Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

temperature, never varying more than a few emotional degrees whether it's losing 2-1 to Pedro Martinez or scattering four hits over eight innings against a powerhouse Oakland club – both of which Nagy has done this season.

"I enjoy playing the game and I understand baseball is a game of peaks and valleys over 162 games," Nagy says. "I've seen people get way too high, and too ecstatic, and on top of the hill and then I've seen the other side of it, too. I've been on both ends and if you watch others, you get a sense of what you need to do to survive, how you need to carry yourself to get through this game at this level."

Nagy has survived quite a bit at the Major League level simply to get where he can be seen as there; not as developing, not as fading, but simply there. His shoulder surgery, performed in June, 1993 for a torn labrum came in his third big league season. A torn labrum has spelled the end of many a promising big league pitching career.

"I didn't know if I'd ever pitch again," Nagy says, remembering the shoulder surgery of seven years ago. "I was thinking about going back to school. The bad shoulder – I still carry

that with me. But I don't think about it at all." (His recent elbow surgery put him on the disabled list for only the second time in his career.)

Nagy's equilibrium has also survived the outbreak of the "We Love You" virus that has been passed between the fans and the Indians since early in the 1995 season. Many have found the adulation to be intoxicating. Nagy stays sober. No self-promotion for him.

"When you play for the Indians, you get plenty of notice when you come to the ballpark," Nagy says. "Especially in this town, people know who you are when you go out to dinner and stuff like that. That's plenty."

"I'm not the type of person who has to seek recognition or approval everywhere. I've got the approval of my teammates."

He's also got the approval of the legendary Don Zimmer, Yankee bench coach, who has seen just about everything baseball can show in the last 50 years.

"He's a good pitcher. By that, I mean he knows how to pitch. He's smart and knowing how to pitch is going to keep getting him out of jams and is also going to extend his career. How old is Nagy? Early thirties? I can see him going out and winning his 15-16-17 games for the next four or five years. Just because he knows how to pitch."

Nagy's contract with the Indians runs through the 2002 season. Should

he return with the same "stuff" as before his recent elbow surgery and average his usual 15 victories a year for the next three, he will have established himself firmly among the top five winning pitchers in Indians history. Should he average 17 a year, only Bob Feller, Mel Harder, and Bob Lemon will have won more games in an Indians uniform.

Nagy's team-first attitude discourages questions about ranking among five Hall-of-Famers in career wins (five of the current top six Indians career victory totals belong to members of the Hall). After a few minutes with Nagy, one knows better than to ask about individual accomplishments.

But don't get the idea Nagy is humorless. He's far from dour. Those close to the team tell of the time Nagy, unable to find a teammate to join him for a cold drink, turned to a small child in the hotel elevator and asked the kid to go along. Unlike many in baseball, Nagy's humor is ironic, self-deprecating, verbal. He's a situation comic, not a standup or slapstick comedian.

Take, for example, the situation in which Nagy found himself in 1988 – a member of the U.S. Olympic Team. Marching in the Opening Ceremonies in Seoul, South Korea, Nagy looked around to see the elite athletes of the world gathered in one stadium – sprinters Carl Lewis and Ben Johnson, swimmers Matt Biondi and Janet Evans – the best of the best.

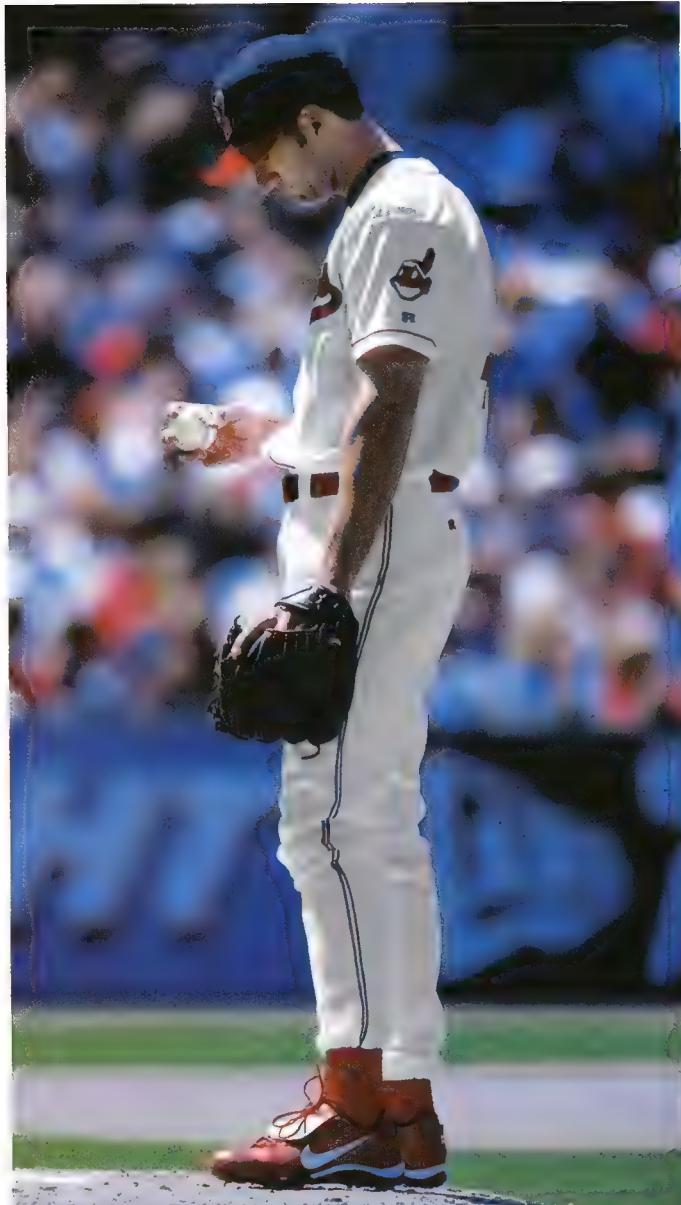


Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

"I REMEMBER LOOKING DOWN AND SEEING THE 'USA' ON MY SHIRT AND THINKING, 'I'M PLAYING FOR MY COUNTRY.' "

Charles Nagy
*– on playing in the
1988 Olympics –*

"So there we are," remembers Nagy, "walking in our special Olympic Opening Ceremonies clothes with the greatest athletes in the world. All of us on the baseball team are looking around, seeing all the athletes in absolute perfect physical condition, knowing about their scientific training equipment, special diets, strict curfews – and we're ballplayers, man."

"We're all wondering when it would be time to go get a beer."

The Olympic Experience wasn't lost on Nagy, though. "At the early part of the summer, when we were first brought together, it was like playing on another All-Star team," he says. "But as

continued, see Charles Nagy, page 56

Nagy will likely complete his Cleveland career without the respect he deserves for what he has accomplished in an Indians uniform.

Only two pitchers have won at least 15 games in each of the last five years. One is Nagy. The other is Atlanta's Greg Maddux. Perception battles reality once again.

"When Maddux wins, it's because he pitches great. When I win, it's because I get great offensive support. The perception is nothing I can control. It does get old, though."

"I don't really care about how I'm perceived as long as my teammates know I go out and bust my behind every time I start. I play for a team with good hitters and fielders. I'm sure not going to apologize for that."

Nor should he. In 1992, Chuck Nagy made a run at 20 victories for an Indians team that won only 76. Four years later, after major shoulder surgery, he made a run at 20 victories for a team that won 99. He's won with terrific



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

Nagy is more concerned with his teammates perception of him than the fans: "I don't really care about how I'm perceived as long as my teammates know I go out and bust my behind every time I start."



The 71st All-Star

Game will be
played on Tues-
day, July 11 at
Turner Field in

Atlanta. Fans

can vote for their favorite Tribe players
at Jacobs Field now through June 25
or via the internet at www.indians.com,
www.majorleaguebaseball.com, or
www.seasonticket.com.

Make sure to cast your vote today!



SEASONTICKET.COM
YOUR ON-DEMAND SPORTS HIGHLIGHT SHOW™

The Premier Place for Food, Drinks & Fun In The Gateway District



Home of the 1/2 lb. Burger
Everything from Wings to
Stuffed Mushrooms,
Chicken Sandwiches to
Roast Beef Dips.
Plus Many Tantalizing Entrees!

727 Bolivar
off E. 9th behind
The Jacobs Field
Scoreboard

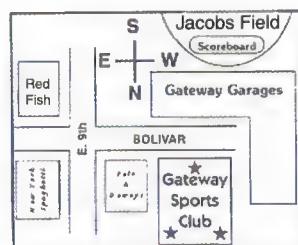




Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

Tribe teams and he's won with Indians teams that were, shall we say, less than terrific. All the while, Chuck Nagy has been there.

For 10 years (with rare absences), he's been there on the mound, every five days. He's been there in the community, often unasked, because, "it's just something I feel like doing." He's been there in the clubhouse, respected by his teammates.

And he's been there in the minds of his opponents, spotting the slider, throwing the sinker, getting the grounders to the tune of more wins than almost anybody in Indians history. Before long, those grounders will help people realize "Ground" Chuck Nagy is one of the best, most consistent pitchers the Indians have ever had.

And they'll realize "Ground" Chuck Nagy is anything but. As a pitcher, he's USDA Choice – no kind of hamburger at all.

League Park...Cleveland Stadium...Jacobs Field

...three great
Cleveland ball parks.

One great mustard!



Bertman's
Original Ball Park Mustard

The Tribe's taste tradition for over 60 years.

P.O. Box 6562 · Cleveland, Ohio 44101-1562
216-431-4460 or 1-800-749-4460

City Heat and

by Jim Ingraham



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

They couldn't be more alike, or more different.

Both are pitchers.

One was born in Flushing, New York, and grew up five minutes from Shea Stadium, in the shadows of the Manhattan skyline.

The other grew up in rural North Carolina, where he spent as much time at the old fishing hole as he did on the pitcher's mound.

Both were first round draft picks. One out of high school, the other out of a big-time college program.

One has been a starter virtually his entire career. The other has been exclusively a reliever.

Both are right-handed. One is 28, the other 29. Both have been injured a lot. One has been traded twice. The other has never been traded.

Both are members of the Indians bullpen. Both want to be the Indians closer. But only one can.

Circumstances suggest they should be arch enemies or, at the very least, grudging, non-speaking teammates. Instead, they are brothers in arms.

Similar in many respects, Karsay (left) and Shuey (right) are supportive of each other.

City heat and country hardball. Steve Karsay and Paul Shuey.

When Mike Jackson left after two seasons as the Indians closer following the 1999 season, Indians officials didn't have to look very far for a successor. They had two of them. Pick your poison.

In most cases, the first requirement for being a closer at the Major League level is to have an arm. Not just an

Shuey said. "I was about 11 years old at the time."

Shuey soon realized he was Mr. Baseball in his new neighborhood.

"My brother Matt and I both played baseball," he said. "All the kids down there mostly played football and soccer. Matt and I played baseball, and we stuck out like a sore thumb. We were better in baseball than everyone else."

So was Karsay in New York, where he was a fan of both New York teams.

"I was more a fan of the Yankees, but I went to more Mets games as a kid because Shea Stadium was five minutes from my house," he said.

Probably the most famous Mets game of Karsay's youth was Game 6 of the 1986 World Series versus the Red Sox – the infamous Bill Buckner game. Karsay was 14 years old at the time.

"Some friends and I listened to the game that night on the radio, while on the roof of a factory, looking across the water at Shea Stadium," said Karsay. "It was really weird. We could see the stadium lights from across the water, and

when the Buckner play happened, we actually could hear the roar of the crowd coming across the water."

By his senior year in high school, Karsay was one of the highest rated pitchers in the country. He had signed a letter of intent to attend Louisiana State University, and because everyone felt he was probably unsignable, he was ignored in the first half of the first round of Major League Baseball's 1990 June Amateur Draft.

Finally the Toronto Blue Jays selected him with the 22nd pick in the first round.

"Back then Toronto would take a chance on players that teams thought were unsignable," Karsay said.

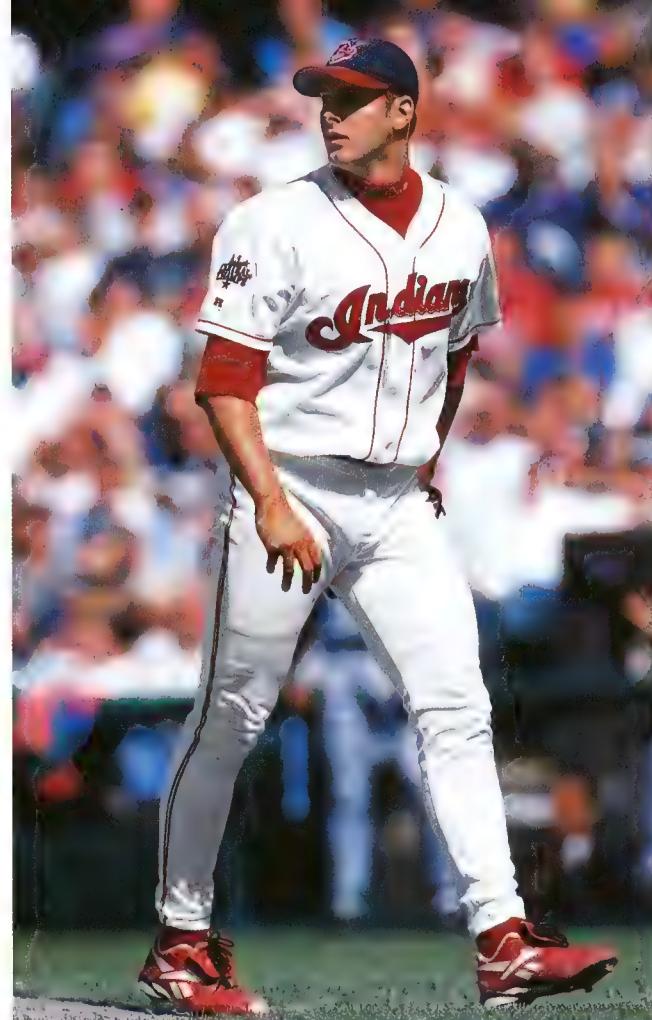
After getting drafted by Toronto, Karsay had a decision to make: begin his professional career immediately, or choose not to sign and go to LSU to play baseball?

"It was a tough decision," he says. "I weighed the pros and cons, and at that point I thought it was best to sign with Toronto and get started on my career."

Shuey should have been so lucky. "There were a lot of scouts that came to see me pitch in high school, but I wasn't drafted," he said. "It was very disappointing. My father and I had even discussed it before the draft, that if any team offered me \$70,000, I would sign."

None did, so Shuey accepted a baseball scholarship to the University of North Carolina,

Karsay (above) was a first-round pick by the Blue Jays in 1990. Shuey (left) was a first-round pick by the Indians in 1992.



Both photos: Gregory Drezdow

where he was a baseball rarity: a star pitcher, who never started.

"I started one game there, got shelled for seven runs, and figured that wasn't for me," he said. "I've been a reliever ever since."

Few players have made the most of a college baseball career. After not getting drafted at all out of high school, Shuey improved so dramatically in college that by the end of his junior year, the Indians selected him with the second pick of the first round of the 1992 June Draft.

By that time, Karsay was already two years into his career with Toronto.

By 1993 he was one of the top rated pitching prospects in the Blue Jays organization. He was pitching for a Class AA Knoxville team that also included Shawn Green, Carlos Delgado, and Alex Gonzalez, three other blue chip prospects.

In July of that year rumors were rampant that the Jays were going to make a trade by the July 31 deadline to bolster their roster for a run at a second consecutive World Series championship.

"Shawn, Carlos, Alex, and I knew one of us was going to be included in the deal. We just didn't know which one," said Karsay.

Karsay was the unlucky one. On July 31 he was traded to Oakland in exchange for Rickey Henderson.

Karsay's four-year career in the Oakland organization was one long nightmare, punctuated by numerous injuries, two elbow surgeries, which caused him to miss the entire 1995 season, and then an ignominious 3-12 record with the A's in 1997.

"More than once I thought my career might be over," he says. "Right after the surgeries, and during the rehab time, you always wonder if you will ever get back to where you were."

Shuey was just hoping to get anywhere. While Karsay was spending most of his time in the operating room and on the disabled list, Shuey was bouncing around from club to club in the Indians Minor League system, trying to adjust to some mechanical changes in his delivery that Indians coaches wanted him to make.

The low point came in 1993, when Shuey began the season at Class AA,

then was demoted to Class A for further work.

"That was tremendously hard for me," he says. "I had a 7.30 ERA at Double-A, was only throwing 92 mph with the new mechanics, when I knew I could throw 98 my old way. At one point, I thought about just taking my money and going fishing. But my wife (Julie) stuck with me, helped me keep my head up, and I finally got through it."

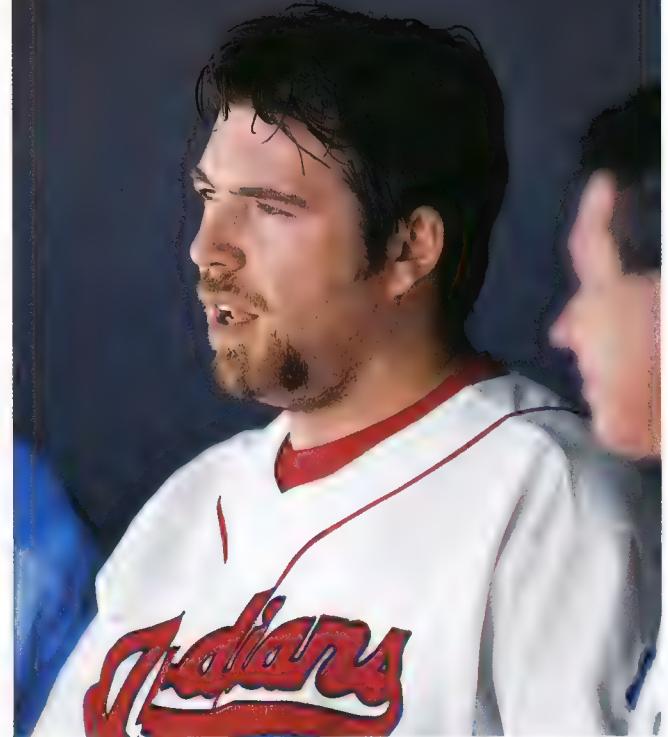
Shuey also got a big assist from his father, Ken, who coached him at every level growing up and still is sort of his unofficial pitching coach. The two men talk pitching all the time; and early this spring when Shuey was struggling, his father – while watching him pitch in a game on TV – detected a flaw in his delivery. He called his son the next day. Paul made the adjustment, and it improved his performance immediately.

Shuey's breakthrough year with the Indians came in 1996, when he appeared in 42 games and was 5-2, with four saves and a 2.85 ERA. He has been a fixture in the Tribe's bullpen ever since.

By 1996 Karsay was in his first year back following "Tommy John" ligament transplant surgery in his elbow. He spent the entire 1996 season in the Minor Leagues, won a spot in Oakland's rotation in 1997, but had a disastrous 3-12 record with a 5.77 ERA.

"That was a good and bad year for me," Karsay says.

Healthy again, Karsay (left) and Shuey (right) have persevered through tough times to achieve the vital roles they play today.



Both photos: Gregory Drezzon

"STEVE AND I WORK OFF EACH OTHER WELL ... WE'RE VERY COMPARABLE."

Paul Shuey

"Good because I proved to myself I could pitch a full season again after the operation on my elbow. But it was bad because I didn't pitch very well."

Following that season Karsay was traded to the Indians for pitcher Mike Fettner. It was a minor trade at the time, but one that has grown with importance for the Indians over the last three years.

"I was excited about the trade, because I needed a fresh start," said Karsay. "I knew when I came to Cleveland nobody would be judging me by what I was before I got hurt. Plus I was going to a winning club. I remember always going home after the season and watching the Indians in the playoffs and World Series. So getting traded here, that was an opportunity to play on a winner, which is what every player wants."

Karsay has made the most of the opportunity. Last year he had the best year of his career, going 10-2 with a



2.97 ERA in 50 appearances for the Tribe. Although he had never been a reliever prior to last year, he made the transition look easy – even though it wasn't.

"I didn't know anything about the bullpen," he said. "I didn't know how to warm up. I didn't know how to pitch two days in a row, much less three or four. As a starter, you start your game, then take four days off to go through your routine for your next start. As a reliever, you come to the ballpark every day knowing you might have to pitch. The more I did it, though, the more I enjoyed being in the bullpen."



Both photos: Gregory Drezdzon

Paul and Julie Shuey have two daughters. Above, Julie holds daughter, Casey Claire, age 1-1/2. Left, Paul amuses daughter, Morgan Elizabeth, age 3.

SHOW YOUR SPIRIT WITH A TRIBE PLATE

PROCEEDS BENEFIT YOUTH CHARITIES

Ohioans can now purchase Cleveland Indians license plates. (Browns and CAVS plates also available.)

The cost is \$35 in addition to your annual registration fee (\$25 is tax-deductible).

You need not wait until your plates come up for renewal – you can purchase the special tags at any time throughout the year.

Best of all, a portion of the proceeds benefit youth charities.

Call 1-888-PLATES3 for more details.



VIZQUEL RECOGNIZED FOR HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

Monday, April 25, 2000, World Vision U.S. President Rich Stearns recognized Indians All-Star shortstop Omar Vizquel and several other players from the Seattle Mariners and the Cleveland Indians for their work in raising money and awareness in response to the flooding in Venezuela this past December which took more than 20,000 lives and left an estimated 400,000 homeless.

The presentation took place at home plate at the beginning of a Mariners/Indians game at Safeco Field. Four players, all from Venezuela, were given plaques with a picture of a Venezuelan child and the scripture:

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

A relief fund was established by World Vision and Omar Vizquel. Vizquel also coordinated a massive awareness campaign for his country which included coordinating a celebrity baseball game in Caracas.

Because of Vizquel's efforts, World Vision was able to raise nearly \$600,000 and is continuing to work in the country. Current programs include resettling families, distributing food, and rebuilding homes and schools. Rebuilding efforts are expected to take three years.

Photo Courtesy
of the Karsays



Steve and Kori
Karsay enjoy some
baseball downtime.

And when Jackson left following last season, Karsay, along with Shuey, were the obvious first candidates to be the new closer.

Karsay and Shuey went to training camp as co-closers, but shortly after the start of the season it evolved into Shuey as the setup man and Karsay closing. For now.

The way Karsay looks at it, following five elbow surgeries, some major, others minor, he's just happy to be pitching, period.

"I had it all taken away from me for a year and a half, so I know how fragile it can be," he says. "This is like my second career."

But his first as a closer.

"Steve and I work off each other well," says Shuey. "He probably throws harder than me, but I have a better breaking ball.

He uses his fastball, and then mixes in some breaking balls. I use my off-speed stuff to set up my fastball. We're very comparable."

The same, yet different.

City heat and country hardball.

Now You CAN CALL YOUR OWN GAME

During your next visit to Jacobs Field, be sure to visit the Indians/Bud Light FanCast Booth. The FanCast Booth has been improved to include video tape capabilities. Reserve an inning or two in the broadcast booth and take home a souvenir video tape of the game's action with your voiceover calling the play-by-play. Please call 216.420.4262 to reserve your game and inning.

All proceeds benefit Cleveland Indians Charities.



Photos: Gregory Drezdzon



SLIDER

Anniversaries • Bar & Bat Mitzvahs
Bachelorette Parties • Birthdays
Charitable & Fund Raising Events
Commercial Events
Corporate Picnics & Events
Family Reunions
Festivals & Carnivals • Grand Openings
Parades • Schools & Church Socials
Wedding Receptions

Make any special occasion more exciting by inviting Indians Mascot Slider to get in on the action. Creating his usual havoc and fun, Slider will make your next private or corporate event a memorable experience for all.

*Detailed information on scheduling a personal appearance is available by calling
(216) 420-4435.*

Slippin' - n Slidin' around TOWN



Photo: Gregory Drezdon

Year-Round

July

August

September

December

January February

March

April

May June

October

November

Celebrate CELEBRATE *your tribe memories*

This handsome tapestry, created in the Tribe's colors of navy, red, and white, brings to life great memories from one of the greatest eras in the storied history of the Cleveland Indians.

This exquisite tapestry features:

- The first World Series Game at Jacobs Field.
- Indians infield All-Stars, Omar Vizquel and Robbie Alomar
- Sluggers Jim Thome, Manny Ramirez, and Richie Sexson
- 1997 All-Star MVP Sandy Alomar, Jr.
- Starting pitchers Bartolo Colon, Charles Nagy, and Dave Burba
- The Jacobs Field Era Championship Logo

Display your commemorative tapestry on a deserving wall of your home or office; wrap yourself in its warmth on a chilly evening; or showcase it in a bedroom as a distinctive coverlet.

This extravagantly soft, 100% preshrunk cotton tapestry (made in the USA) also makes a great gift for a loved one or business associate.

A portion of each sale benefits Cleveland Indians Charities, supporting programs for youths throughout Greater Cleveland.

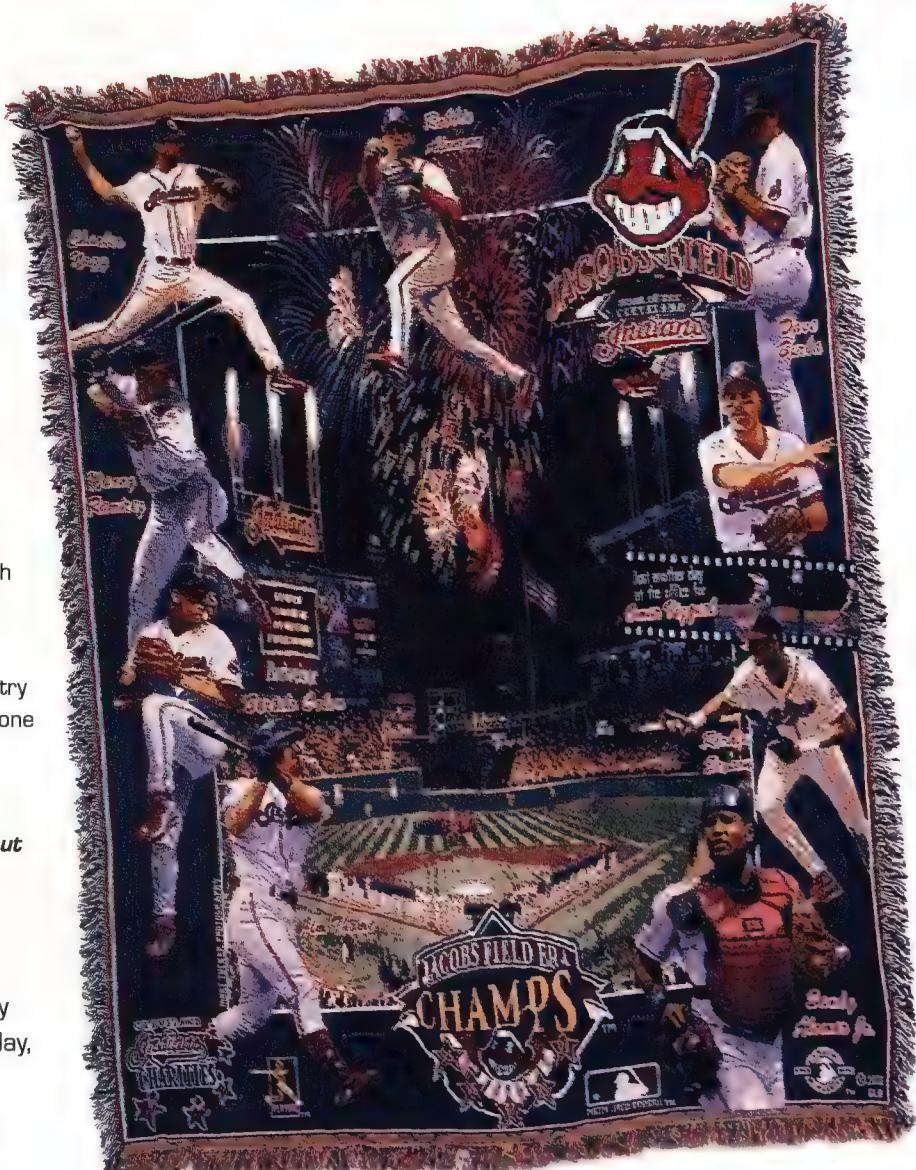
guaranteed quality

Your Indians tapestry includes a lifetime warranty on workmanship and materials as well as a 30-day, unconditional, money-back guarantee.

decorative hanging rod also available

The bright luster of this rich, metallic gold hanging rod offers an elegant, crowning touch to the display of your tapestry. The rod features the Indians logo and includes all hardware for easy assembly.

To order, call toll free 1.800.38.TRIBE or visit us on the web at www.indians.com.



All player photos by: Gregory Drezdzon

The OTHER Ramirez

by Steve Herrick

When Indians manager Charlie Manuel looks at Alex Ramirez, he sees more than a bench player. Manuel sees a player with a lot of ability who could put up some big numbers if he got the chance to see substantial playing time.

"I think if Alex played every day, he would hit between .260 and .270 with 20 to 25 home runs in his first season," says Manuel. "That's what Jim Thome and Manny Ramirez did their first year. After that, I think Alex would do better. He has the ability to hit 35 to 40 homers a season."

No one knows when that opportunity will come for Ramirez, a 25-year-old outfielder who made the team in Spring Training this season. Ramirez, long considered one of the top prospects in the Indians Minor League system, has been the subject of trade rumors for the last two or three years. While he has put up excellent numbers in the Minors, he hasn't been able to crack the starting outfield because there have been so many talented players in front of him.

"This organization has treated me nice," he says. "This is where I want to be. It's their decision, though. Whatever decision they make, I'll be happy with it. I always try to give 100 percent and do the best I can."

Ramirez, who bats and throws right-handed, makes one thing clear. Since



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

he grew up in the Indians organization and has worked his way up through the Minor Leagues, he'd like to stay in Cleveland.

"I want to show that I can be an everyday player here," he says.

Through the Indians first 29 games, Ramirez was batting .231 (3-for-13) with two runs batted in.

Hard work and never giving up have been the keys for Ramirez. In fact, Indians assistant general manager Mark Shapiro always brings up Ramirez's name when he talks to the Tribe's Minor Leaguers.

"I use him as an example for our Minor League guys all the time," says Shapiro. "I tell them that no matter what happens to them, they should keep working hard and stay positive. That's what Alex did."

The Indians signed Ramirez, a native of Venezuela, as a non-drafted free agent in 1991. He played for the Tribe's Dominican Republic League team in 1992, split the 1993 season between Class A Kinston (North Carolina) and Class A Burlington (North Carolina) and played the 1994 season at Class A Columbus (Georgia).



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

"HE HAS VERY GOOD BAT SPEED, IF NOT THE BEST BAT SPEED IN THE ORGANIZATION."

Mark Shapiro

Indians Assistant General Manager

- regarding Alex Ramirez -

Ramirez put up decent numbers, but the Indians sent him to Class A Bakersfield of the California League on a co-op assignment to start the 1995 season. That's not what teams usually do with top prospects.

"He got sent to a co-op team and he could've gotten down, but he didn't," says Shapiro. "He used that as a chance to play and used it to make a statement."

A statement, indeed. Ramirez hit .323 with 10 homers, 52 RBI, and 13 stolen bases in 98 games at Bakersfield before being sent back to the Indians Class AA team at Canton-Akron.

The best was ahead for Ramirez. In 1996, he hit .329 for Canton-Akron, the third-highest average in the Eastern League. He led the league in hits (169) and triples (12) while hitting 14 homers with 85 RBI. Two years later, Ramirez blasted 34 home runs, drove in 103 runs, and had a 28-game hitting streak for Class AAA Buffalo. He earned the Lou Boudreau Award as the Indians top Minor League position player in 1998.

Last season, Ramirez hit .305 with 12 home runs and 50 RBI in 305 at-bats at Buffalo. That earned him a call-up from the Indians. In 97 at-bats, he hit .299 with three homers and 18 RBI. His highlight came on September 6 when he went 2-for-4 with a homer and a career-high five RBI.

Ramirez is trying to improve his versatility by learning to play all three outfield positions. Last season, he played 22 games in right field, six in left, and one in center. He started 14 games at designated hitter.

"To me, center field is easier," Ramirez says. "You do have to be fast, but you can see the ball coming straight at you. In left and right, the ball goes at different angles. It takes a lot of practice to learn those angles."

Shapiro thinks Ramirez's willingness to work hard is his most positive quality.

"He's a special person," says Shapiro. "He has as good a work ethic and as much passion for the game as anyone you want to see."

Shapiro first saw Ramirez play at Class A Burlington in 1993.

"His defense has improved markedly since Burlington," says Shapiro. "He's always had good bat speed. He has a better feel for the strike zone. He's still an aggressive hitter, but he's more under control than he used to be. He has very good bat speed, if not the best bat speed in the organization."

Ramirez's hard work has shown up in his physical appearance as well.

"When I first signed, I weighed 176 pounds," says the 5-foot-11 Ramirez.

"Now I weigh 200 pounds. I feel much better this way. I have more energy and more power."

"He's in very good shape," says Shapiro. "If there's any area Alex can control, he does it. It's a non-issue. He's a physical specimen. He's made himself into a strong player and he's maturing as a hitter."

Ramirez would like to hit for more power.

"I always had natural power for a skinny guy," he says. "Now I think they expect more from me. I'm more of a line-drive hitter now, which is good for my average, but I think I would like to get the ball in the air some more and get a few more home runs."

"Usually guys who are good hitters when they come up, become power hitters over time," says Shapiro. "The same thing happened to (former Indian) Brian Giles. It's not that unusual, but Alex has done a good job."

Shapiro has been with the Indians since 1992. As the Director of Minor League Operations from 1994 through 1998, he and Ramirez have developed a close relationship. The two



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

have talked about how Ramirez needs to be patient while waiting for his chance.

"I think Alex has the right way of looking at it," says Shapiro. "He knows he could play more somewhere else, but he also knows it will be that much sweeter when he gets a chance to play here than it would be with a losing organization."

There could be extra playing time available for Ramirez next season if Manny Ramirez (the two are not related), leaves for free agency.

"Nobody knows about Manny, but it's possible that will happen," says Alex. "We have a lot of good players here. We have to wait and see. I think Manny is going to stay right here, but whether he stays or leaves, I wish him luck."

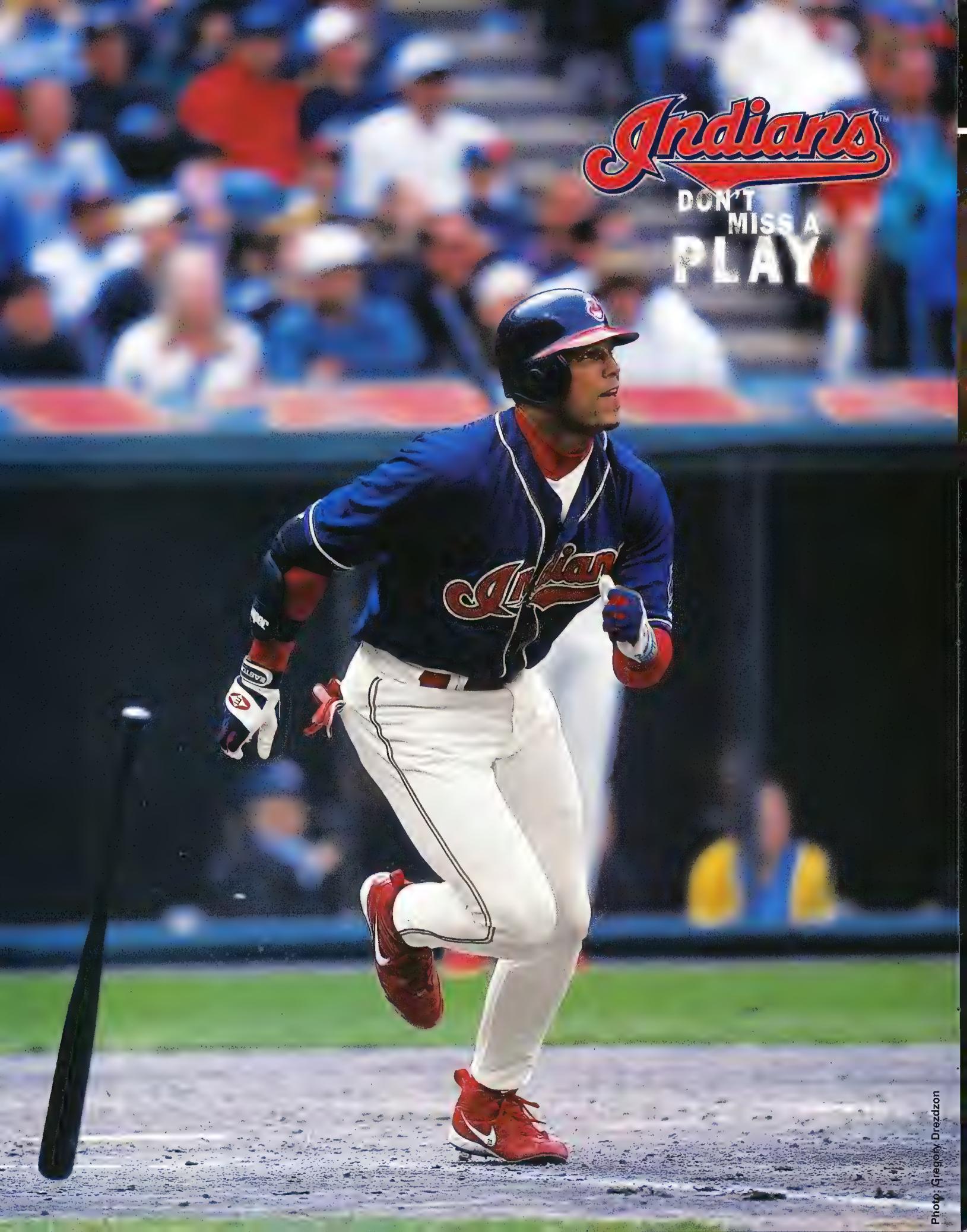
"Alex doesn't worry about things he can't control," says Shapiro. "He doesn't get bogged down in negativity. There will be a day when he'll get that opportunity and I'm confident he'll take advantage of it."

Ramirez says becoming a Christian two years ago has helped him deal better with impatience. He and his wife, Liz, live in Winter Haven, FL, the site of Indians Spring Training. They recently purchased a home there.

"I believe God has a plan for all of us," he says. "Knowing that gives me peace. I know my wife would want me to stay with the Indians. Right now, that's something I can't control. I can be an everyday player. It might take time, but I've been waiting for a long time. I think I can wait just a little longer."

Whenever that happens, it looks like the wait, thanks to Ramirez's ability and work ethic, will be worth it.

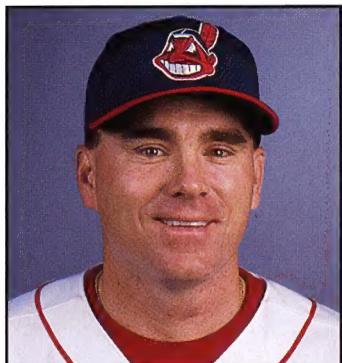


A dynamic photograph of a baseball player in mid-stride, running towards the right. He is wearing a dark blue Cleveland Indians jersey with "Indians" written in red script, white pants with a red belt, and red Nike cleats. He is wearing a blue batting helmet. His right arm is extended forward, and his left arm is bent at the elbow. A white baseball glove is on his left hand. In the background, there is a blurred crowd of spectators in the stands. The setting appears to be a night game at a stadium.

Indians

DON'T
MISS A
PLAY

THE CLEVELAND INDIANS



Scott KAMIENIECKI 30

Age: 35, born April 19, 1964
in Mt. Clemens, MI
Position: Pitcher
B/T: R/R Ht: 6'0" Wt: 200



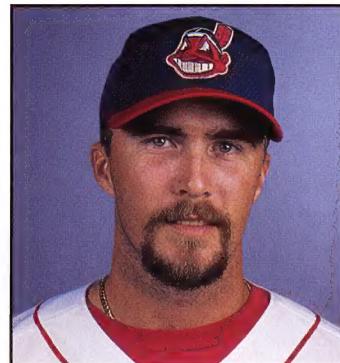
Steve KARSAY 20

Age: 28, born March 24, 1972
in Flushing, NY
Position: Pitcher
B/T: R/R Ht: 6'3" Wt: 209



Kenny LOFTON 7

Age: 32, born May 31, 1967
in East Chicago, IN
Position: Outfielder
B/T: L/L Ht: 6'0" Wt: 180



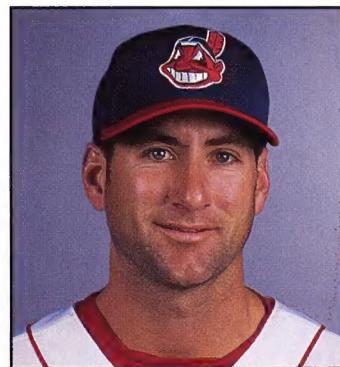
Tom MARTIN 36

Age: 29, born May 21, 1970
in Charleston, SC
Position: Pitcher
B/T: L/L Ht: 6'1" Wt: 200

OUR *DYNAMIC* DUO

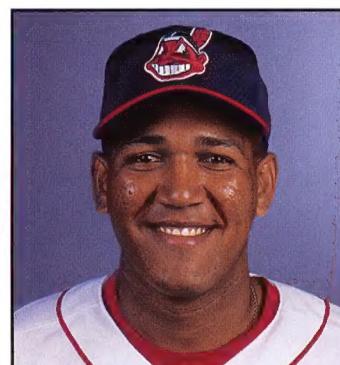


Photo: Gregory Drezdzon



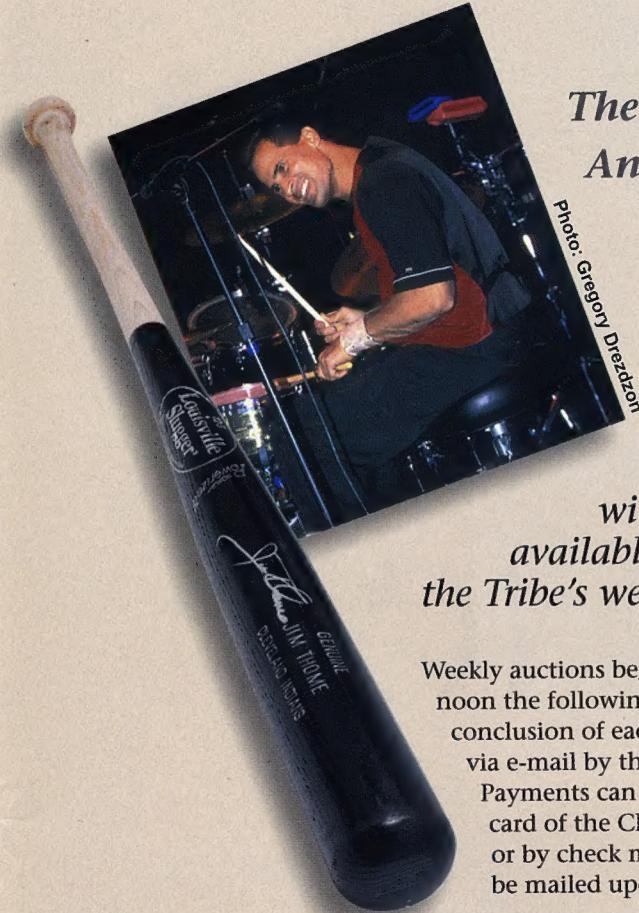
Charles NAGY 41

Age: 32, born May 5, 1967
in Fairfield, CT
Position: Pitcher
B/T: L/R Ht: 6'3" Wt: 200



Alex RAMIREZ 61

Age: 25, born October 3, 1974
in Caracas, Venezuela
Position: Outfielder
B/T: R/R Ht: 5'11" Wt: 176



*They're New! You Won't Want To Miss Them.
And They Benefit Cleveland Indians Charities!*

ONLINE AUCTIONS

Memorabilia collectors have a new online destination — www.indians.com

*Cleveland Indians Charities
will make four autographed items
available per week for online auction via
the Tribe's website, www.indians.com*

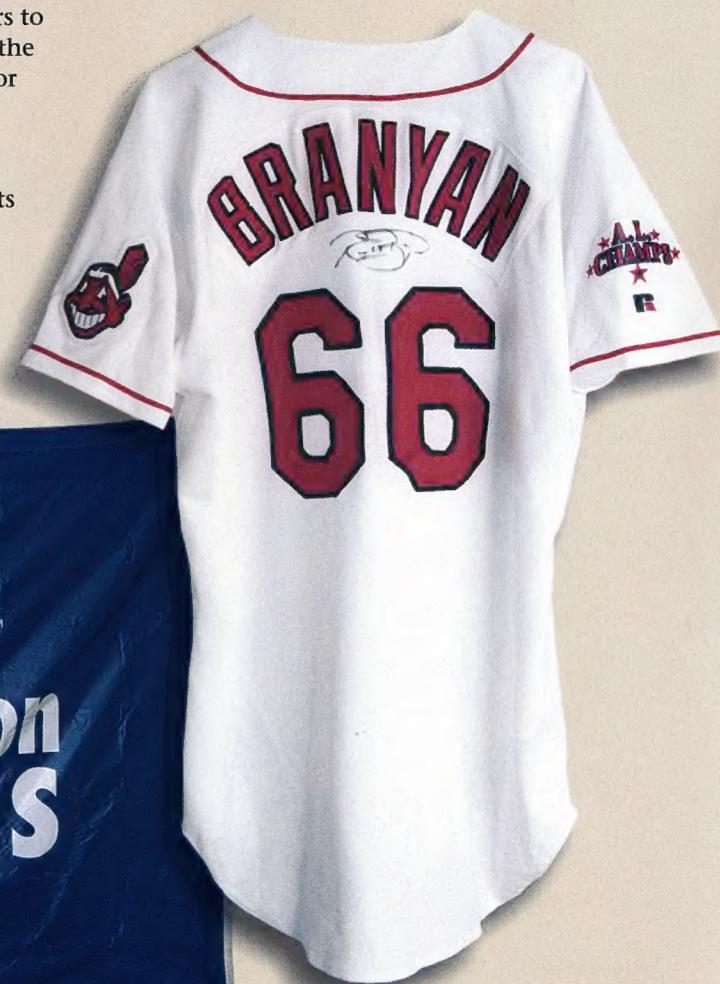
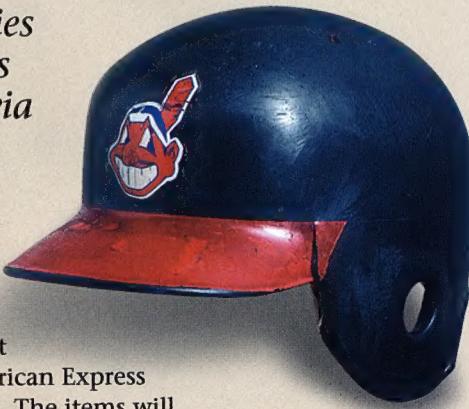
Weekly auctions begin each Monday at 3PM and run until noon the following Monday. The highest bidders at the conclusion of each weekly auction will be contacted via e-mail by the Indians for payment arrangements.

Payments can be made by MasterCard, the preferred credit card of the Cleveland Indians, or by VISA, Discover, American Express or by check made payable to Cleveland Indians Charities. The items will be mailed upon receipt of payment.

The highest bidders will have 48 hours to respond to the e-mail notification of their bid selection before the next highest bidder will be awarded the item. Minimum bids for each item will range from \$20 - \$100. All items will include a letter of authenticity.

All proceeds benefit Cleveland Indians Charities which supports youth education and recreation programs in the Greater Cleveland area.

Auction items will vary each week, but may include banners, autographed jerseys, bats, helmets, and photographs.





Tim Raines
44

Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thome", is positioned in the lower right area of the photograph.

Photo: Gregory Drezdzon